

Critics Corner

Wuthering Heights

By Michael P. Smith

WUTHERING HEIGHTS (1939)

Produced by Samuel Goldwyn
Directed by William Wyler
Based on the novel by Emily Brontë

Photography by Gregg Toland
Starring: Laurence Olivier, Merle Oberon, Flora Robson, Geraldine Fitzgerald, David Niven, Donald Crisp, Leo G. Carroll, & Hugh Williams.

Awards: New York Film Critics' Award — Best Picture of the Year; Academy Award — Best Black-and-White Cinematography; National Board of Review — Best Acting Awards (Laurence Olivier & Geraldine Fitzgerald)

Running Time: 104 minutes

Emily Brontë's novel, "Wuthering Heights," touches the most deeply disturbing romantic passions in its tempestuous story of a love that triumphs over morality, over the obdurate realities of class distinction, over space, over time, and over death. William Wyler's film, "Wuthering Heights" is an audacious gamble to plumb the excesses of romanticism, and most probably for just this reason, one of the most treasured films by generations of fans.

Director Wyler, the consummate Hollywood craftsman, whose motion pictures have won more awards in every division of filmmaking than any other director (thirteen Academy Awards for his actors alone), has correspondingly inspired many collaborators to their best work. Perhaps, none is of more significance to world cinema than Laurence Olivier, who claimed in a 1960's interview to have discovered the secret of camera interaction in making "Wuthering Heights" with Wyler. Certainly, Olivier, in his electrifying transformation from the callow, peevish, young Heathcliff into a brooding, satanic avenger, taught his fellow actors the meaning of holding an heroic presence on screen. Olivier's reaching for a

larger-than-life character is the most pervasive aspect of this larger-than-life film. It is also interesting to note that the highly respected New York Film Critics' Award for Best Picture of 1939 went to "Wuthering Heights," and not to the otherwise greatly acclaimed "Gone With The Wind."

"Wuthering Heights" will be shown on Tuesday, November 5th, in U.C. 107 at 7:30 P.M. only.

Mr. Smith Goes to Washington

MR. SMITH GOES TO WASHINGTON (1939)

Produced and directed by Frank Capra

Starring: James Stewart, Jean Arthur, Claude Rains, Edward Arnold, Guy Kibbe, Thomas Mitchell, Beulah Bondi, and H.B. Warner

Running Time: 130 minutes

One of the most popular films of the 1930's, "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington" received eleven Academy Award nominations, and won James Stewart the New York Film Critics' Award as Best Actor. Frank Capra's comedy classic centers around Jefferson Smith (Stewart), an idealistic country youth who comes to Washington as a short-term Senator, and learns quickly about the harshness of politics. In spite of all the plots against him, Jefferson is triumphant in the end, as a result of help from his secretary (Jean Arthur) and fans, and his own persevering belief in democracy. Smith's victory, as represented by Capra, is the victory of all Americans over the double-dealing politicians who would abuse the democratic system.

"Mr. Smith Goes to Washington" will be shown on Wednesday, November 6th, in U.C.107 at 7:00 and 9:30 P.M. Also on the program is an Outward Bound Film, to be presented by Academic Forum at 6:30 P.M. only.

"Hothouse"



by Robin Stern

"Hothouse," a play by Megan Terry, is presently being shown (through Nov. 10 at the Chelsea Theater Center located in the Brooklyn Academy of Music. "Hothouse" focuses on the relationships between three women: a vibrant sexy woman, Roz, who is separated from her husband, Roz's mother and her daughter, Jody. The play exposes the conflicts that they have with the men in their lives and more interestingly it reveals the inability of these three women to leave each other. Roz and Jody are "baby chicks" with Ma as their Mother Hen. They're strong and they're weak, but most of all these women are confused about their lives. As Jody put it, "Insanity is rampant

in this house, it grows in every corner." Alcohol is their staple and a significant contributor to the insanity.

The impressive cast includes Helen Gallagher as Roz (she is a recipient of two Tony Awards), Brad Sullivan as her husband (he can be seen in the film, "The Sting"), Dorothy Chase as Ma and Kathleen Tolan as Jody. Helen Gallagher and Kathleen Tolan definitely dominate the stage. Gallagher is loud and brassy but not enough so as to completely disguise, Roz's con-

fusion, fears, and unhappiness. She comes across both forceful and smooth while still revealing Roz's immaturity and childlike dependencies, which is quite an accomplishment.

Tolan convincingly portrays a young girl torn by innumerable conflicts. She loves her father, her mother, her grandmother and her boyfriend. She hates the lives that her family leads, but at the same time she feels the intense reality of the whole situation. Jody is very strong and clearheaded but like Roz, she is a 'baby-chick.' Jack is an independent fisherman, strong and free. He constantly exerts complete authority and physically reacts to any opposition. Roz needs constant reassurance of acceptance and affection, even though she consistently antagonizes Jack. He is coarse, crude and demanding, and will not submit to Roz. He leaves her to go to war and leaves her again when he comes home. Jack is always searching for an escape to prove his manhood, for Roz too often puts him in a position where her irrationality threatens his masculinity. Ma represents the origins and inevitable continuance of the sad, mad life which the women lead. She seems proud of the lifestyle that has perpetuated.

Both Sullivan and Chase do a fine job of portraying these characters. The play is set in a small town in the state of Washington in 1953.

The Chelsea Theater, which seats about 150, at first seems out of place in contrast with the immense size of the Brooklyn Academy of Music. However, it is tucked away on the fourth floor and its intimacy allows for total involvement and enjoyment of this fine production.

Carnal Knowledge

by Robin Stern

Carnal Knowledge is a Joseph Levine production, directed by Mike Nichols. The film stars Jack Nicholson, Art Garfunkel, Candice Bergen and Ann Margaret.

The film is essentially one concerning identity problems and the method through which they're handled (unsuccessfully) is implied by the title.

Jack Nicholson plays a college 'smoothie' who 'lays' his way through life until he is almost totally impotent. His imprisoned self will never be able to escape and even a semblance of happiness is impossible to achieve because of his obsession and attitude with regards to sex.

Art Garfunkel is cast as Nicholson's college roommate and lifetime friend, Sandy. Sandy is a "schmuck" according to his roommate. He plays the whole 'happy marriage role' and ends up at forty with a sixteen

year old Greenwich Village girl who is "truly sensitive" and has shown him where his head is at.

The other party involved in Sandy's 'happy marriage' is Candice Bergen. They met in college where she was studying pre-law with the intent to become a lawyer. She is attractive, witty and pseudo-existential which were the perfect college criteria for getting involved with both Garfunkel and Nicholson.

Ann Margaret plays the woman who finally coerces Nicholson into marriage under not too pleasant circumstances with a not too pleasant conclusion.

The characters' lives are filled with ultimatums, games and pathetic attitudes which result in some pretty sad lifestyles.

The acting on a whole is fine but Nicholson is especially superb (of course!). Despite being such a bastard, he really merits a lot of sympathy.

WERD Profiles

Name: Michael P. Smith
Age: Almost 21
Profession: Executive-In-Waiting
Hobbies: Model building, record collecting, stage managing, film viewing.
Last Book Read: WHY A DUCK?
Last Accomplishment: Produced the soundtrack for the Admiration Dept.'s new slide presentation.
Quote: "We all need a little diversion now and then, especially on Monday nights."
Profile: Warm, witty, and difficult to sketch
Radio Station: WERD - 590 AM
Show: "Diversions" - Monday, 8:00-10:00 P.M. - Nostalgic radio comedy and drama

